Some Stray Thoughts

On being a Religious Man

By

Gopi Kishen Muju

A Voice of Silence Publication

Inside Poonch House Gate Panjtirthi Jammu-180001

To The

Memory

of my father

Pandit Dina Nath Muju

who introduced

me

to

Shri J.Krishnamurti



PT. DINA NATH MUJU





SH. J.KRISHNAMURTI

A Comment

"...... The attempt is a laudable one because the analysis is quite rational....The 'essay' deserves to be read also because it reflects the psychology , rather religious psychology of an average Hindu. We can be Hindus without knowing what Hinduism stands for, without , in fact, being a Hindu. I am reminded of a cameo by Prof. Arvind Gigoo. A Kashmiri Pandit is asked, What is Shaivism? "He replies, "I do not know, but I am proud of this faith. "In another cameo (The Ugly Kashmiri; Cameos in Exile) Gigoo defines Renaissance among Kashmiri Pandits -revival of 5000 -year old dead rituals.

The random thoughts contained in the booklet give us what all of us think. But since we have got somehow stuck in grooves inherited from our ancestors and accept our ancient relgious lore as something unchangeable. Prof. Muju's outpourings may awaken us out of the night of ignorance and we may cease to call ourselves Hindus just because we were born Hindu. Prof. Muju's thoughts are provoked by the changed environment into which modern technology and sceintific researchs has launched us. One may ask the question Einstine once asked " can one be religious without belonging to any professed relgion?" Prof. Muju's analyses are an attempt to put us in the mental frame of rational enquiry.

One who has studied J.Krishnamurti cannot but find the great Philosoper's echo in these write ups.

—Prof. R.N.Kaul

A Note

These "Stray Thoughts" are essentially meant for those who are prepared to think beyond words and conclusions; who can "see" beyond the curtain and burden of accumulated knowledge, pre-conceived notions and are intelligent enough to move out of the trodden path and set grooves of ideas. These "Stray Thoughts" need to be "understood" in their own light.

—Gopi Kishen Muju

The Golden Stairs

A clean life, an open mind,
        A pure heart, an eager intellect,
An unveiled spiritual perception,
        A brotherliness for all,

A readiness to give and receive advice and instruction,
        A loyal sense of duty to the Teacher,
A willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH,
        Once we have placed our confidence in,
And believe that Teacher to be in possession of it;

A courageous endurance of personal injustice,
        A brave declaration of principles,
A valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked,
        And a constant eye to the ideal of human progression
And perfection which the Sacred Science depicts—

These are the golden stairs
        Up the steps of which the learner may climb
To the Temple of Divine Wisdom

—H.P. Blavatsky

HE

(A Poem by Gopi Kishen Muju Dedicated to J. Krishnamurti Ji)

He was "found" at the seashore
Off the plains of India
Among a group of boys.
Shining in light of the sun.

A young boy,
His aura had no marks of selfishness
As the occultists could feel

Declared a world teacher,
He went round
Holding discussions
Delivering talks and teaching
Just as a true teacher would do..

He spoke of Truth Beauty and Joy,
And ecstasy of being alone ,
He chanted about Love,
He sang of Happiness , Sorrow and Freedom.
The living of Life.

He loved the agony of life
As he loved the beauty of it,
Love, Death ,Creation and Destruction
Were all same for him,
For him creation was in total destruction
And Complete Death

He spoke about intelligence and understanding,
He urged to free the mediocre mind,
From the cage of rituals, dogmas and superstitions
And the vice of fear.

He urged for total denial
By "seeing the truth as truth
False as false
And truth in the false"

Total denial of thought,
word and ideas
bring
freedom from known, he said.
"Denial of known
Is the essence of freedom".

They heard him,
Followed him wherever he went,
Only a few could listen
And perhaps understand him !

Breaking all organizational set up
He declared,
"Truth is a pathless land"
It shook the world of faith and belief.

He talked about the Religious Mind, Meditation,
Cessation of thought for the essence to be;
And to receive showers of benediction
Thought must have a stop.

They left him,.
Distanced from him;
But he moved on his way
Into the realms of Freedom and Happiness

He moved on alone.

Alas !
He could not give them what they wanted..

He pointed out, hinted at;
But they wanted to be led, to be shown,.
To be fed with a spoon.
And he wanted them to be Free

A sign-board he acted,
not a crutch.
He was a teacher and friend.
He denied to be any authority to be followed,
quoted and worshipped..
He toiled for man's Freedom.

They felt disillusioned, disappointed and sad
For they could not get what they came for,
And sought.

Leaving him
They went to their gods and temples,
Rituals , beliefs and faiths
Superstitions, born out of fear.
for they had many of these all.
They could not break the chains of bondage.,
And set themselves free.

He felt sad for them!

Alone but Free.
He goes his way,
Beyond the mountains
Beyond Time ,Thought
Into Eternity

Few understood him,
Who alone enjoyed the Music of Life
And sang the Song of Life with him.
Loved and Lived it.



Emblem of the Theosophical Society

"Man Cannot be happy without being good"

— D.N.Muju

Identity...."Sir, my Name is ...."

A gentleman had been to the South. He wanted to visit some temples over there. In one of the temples he found a notice board "Non-Hindus not allowed or only Hindus Allowed", something like that; similar to a signboard "Non-Muslims Not Allowed" which one can find in front of mosque in some Muslim countries. He was surprised and disturbed as well, as he came from a place where no such sign boards were to be seen, though by convention and practice Hindus would not enter Mosques to pray and the Muslims would not enter the temples to offer Namaz, while some important shrines were open to all devotees. He had not come to pray or ask God for some special favour

like long life, money, power, prestige, success in the elections etc. He was empty handed and just wanted to see this beautiful piece of architecture, a product of human imagination and creation of thought. All places of worship were same for him, as people had faith in them. Since it was a place where people worshipped God he too felt an urge to pay his obeisance ; though the signboard could not be a barrier, as he was a Hindu by name (and by birth as well), but what could happen if some one questioned him or asked him to prove his credentials, identity. How would he act. After all he was entering omnipotent, omnipresent, omnibenevolent, omniscient God's house, guarded by mortals. He did not know how to prove his credentials. A Sacred thread, no he did not have, no choti (tuft of hair) on head as he was bald, no tattoo marks on his body. So how could he prove his identity, if asked. He did carry a Hindu family name with him. He had not studied any serious scriptures, religious books which he could quote or recite. He was trying to move on an unbeaten path. He kept watching for some time. People came in usual local southern dress, which he did not have on his body. Waiting for some time he found a clue, people were carrying flowers

and some coconuts and entering the temple barefooted after washing their feet and reciting some Mantras. He too got a garland of flowers, a coconut and washing his feet he too entered the temple area reciting some monosyllables to himself and pronouncing word "Om" somewhat loudly so that the priest could hear him and perhaps not question him. Entering the temple, the garland and coconut were taken from him. The garland was kept back by the priests while the coconut was returned to him as prasad after touching it to the Deity. Some flowers too were given to him. Devotees were not allowed to go near the deity and touch the idol. Only the priests, there were a couple of them, had the right and authority to be near the Deity, collect the flowers coconuts, cash etc. and sprinkle some holy water on the devotees and wishing them well on behalf of the Deity. Folding his hands he came out happy that he could enter the temple without any hustle, have the darshan of the Deity and leave without much trouble. Even then while leaving someone amongst the visiting devotees remarked, "Sir, why did you come with the pants on, normally we do not use English dress here while visiting the temple. You must be from outside, and Are you a Hindu ?" Lo ! the moment of test or crisis had come. He was baffled, how to react and without wasting time he communicated his Hindu name to him . "Sir, My name is ...." . "Very good , from Brahmin class. "Sorry sir, to have put this question to you". Feeling relieved of mental embarrassment, the gentleman moved on.

..........And the Search Continues

But the incident put a question in his mind-"Who is a Hindu ? And What is Hinduism ? What makes one a Hindu ? Is God also a Hindu ? Is the Deity inside the temple also a Hindu? Is there any separate and specific identity needed to be a Hindu and be separated from other human beings who too are supposed to be created by the same Supreme Power, the Universal Power of Creation to follow the Universal law of Preservation and Destruction ?The questions continued to haunt him for long. Who can answer him and solve the riddle to him ? He searched for an answer in books, literature and even high placed priests, but could not get enlightened on the subject. His search continues on the pathless land of Truth.

In Search of God

So
We walk
And talk
With our legs and tongue
But reach no destination
Having none.
Nor any conclusion
And only say: So on So on.
We ask ourselves and others :
What are we ?
Whence have we, come?
And where do we go from here ?
As we walk tired in this search,
And having no perch
We lean for support
on the Upanished love
And rest our tired minds
on the golden steps of the Gita.
Lotze, Confucious
And the Buddha we think
Will show us the way.
Out of this confusing labyrinth and cobwebs of spritual and intellectual caves,
Nobody, none, seems to know.
So
Where do we go from hence,?
We talk, walk again.
To the stable in Bethelhem we repair
And meet the Prophet on the Cross
All is dross all dross
Nothing serves our purpose
Across golden grains of sand

We direct our steps
To Mecca and Medina
And seek if the Prophet of one God, Peace and brotherhood
Can be of help
To remove the scales from our eyes.
We turn to the skies
And under the tree
wait for Godot to come
No, nobody comes
Long has been our march,
Long been our wait
To know the mystery that haunts our soul
We walk and talk
Ask = can we ever reach the goal?"
We shout to the gods
To help us get out of the labyrinth
By unravelling some ball of thread.
We tell each other to softy tread
Lest the angel that may come
To whisper the secret to us,
Be flown away.
Finding no clue
We walk and talk like doubting Thomase
Go back into our own shell,
Again enter into the dark corridors of the soul
To be lost for ever on way to own goal
Within our own damned soul.

-R.N.Kaul

Cleaning

Recently a temple had to be cleaned when some minister having a Muslim name and faith visited it as part of his responsibility and function. Orthodox persons were hurt and decided to clean the temple as a Muslim had entered it. Lo ! the honorable Minister decided to enter the temple premises next time again as the assignment of his ministry demanded it. Perhaps he has not visited the temple again yet.

Cleaning

Some Muslim Dargah, holy shrine was to be cleaned because some one had entered into it wearing an un-Islamic dress and some film shots were taken inside the premises. An apology was sought from the defaulter. When some time back a popular man entered a mosque wearing a veil to hide his identity , which he could have otherwise also hidden, so that his fans did not trouble him, this created a furor and fury. Should men be allowed to enter these religious places with Burqua on ? They said all such acts defile the sanctity of a holy place. Such issues do arise when sentiments and issues of faith are being questioned and put to test.

Repairing God's House - Issue of Currency & Hand

While fighting terrorists on one hand and saving innocent people from the wrath of militants, Indian army has been doing a lot of community work as well in Kashmir for the last several years under a specially drawn up project called "Operation Sadhbhawna" (Operation Goodwill), under which special programmes and projects are planned and executed. Helping local people especially in remote and far flung areas of the State, setting up mini-hydroelectric projects, setting up schools, sending various delegations of population on different kinds of tours - educational, cultural, religious, social etc. holding medical camps are some of the activities taken up under this project, besides helping people in facing natural calamities. Recently the army in J & K had, at the request of some local people, initiated some repair works of some mosques in Kashmir valley as a goodwill gesture under this Operation Sadhbhawna. Surprisingly clerics, ullamas of the Muslim community protested and warned the army not to interfere in the religious affairs of the community. A very awkward situation was created. Plea being that non-Muslims could not repair the mosques and the Indian (Hindu) money could not be utilized for the repair work, though the entire labour force was from the local Muslim population. It virtually became a political issue and an issue of confrontation. Vested interests were on a look out to seize the opportunity and exploit it for their political ends and benefit. Fortunately, after initial refusal, the army agreed not to go ahead with any repair work and a serious controversy was avoided.

Colour of Donation

Surprisingly , in most of the Muslim shrines and even mosques for that matter, which are visited by both the Hindus and Muslims and even others as tourists, donations pour in from all directions and nowhere can it be differentiated whether the money came from a Muslim or a Hindu or any other person, as all donate in the name of God, as per their faith. After all it is only the national wealth which is used in these activities.

God's Abode

After the earthquake of 8th October 2005 a huge boundary wall of a temple fell down in Srinagar. It remained in that condition for almost eight months. The temple area measuring about two kannals was without a wall and it became a free passage for one and all. There were only a few Hindu families living in the nearby area because of exodus of the Hindus from the locality, and they were not connected with the management of the temple and moreover did not have money enough to conduct repair work ,they could not rebuild the wall. The management , though in exile, had approached the concerned Deputy Commissioner for relief to enable them to repair the wall , but alas ! no help came forward. Obviously repair of an earthquake damaged temple (and of course any religious place) could not be on the priority list of the Government for relief under Earthquake Relief Programme. It was only in the Summer of 2006 when some functionary of the temple visited the place, constituted a new Managing Committee for the temple so that reconstruction/repair work could be taken up. Meanwhile when some local Muslims came to know about the arrival of the functionary of the temple, and whom they knew as he belonged to the area and had still a house there, some office bearers of the mohalla committee (obviously all Muslims) approached him and offered to repair the boundary wall of the temple if the temple committee was short of funds. These Muslim gentlemen expressed that they felt it bad to see the temple so badly exposed and God's house with a fallen wall around. They had not taken up the repair work in hand on their own, lest it created any problem. They were thanked for their goodwill gesture However, they were told that the wall had been rebuilt, and they could donate money for some other activity or cause. They promised to do so. It would hardly matter whose money was spent in rebuilding the boundary wall so long it was out of goodwill, sincerity , truth and love , as God uses only one language of love for communication and manifests Himself through it alone.

Real obeisance

If I am not wrong, after the advent of Islam in Kashmir most of the temples in the Valley have been built mainly by Muslim artisans, workers, craftsmen , masons and labourers, but after their completion the same workers do not enter the temple to pray or worship as a rule, convention and practice lest it disturbs the peace of a Hindu devotee and also because they do not believe in idol worship . They prefer to pay their respects and obeisance from outside the temple premises; though at most of these temples and shrines it is the Muslim population who sell puja material and other essential items and set up shops for their sale.

Politicized Deities

Under the political secular concept now visits by policians to a religious place, a temple , a mosque or gurudhawra have become a matter of political fashion and necessity. This political compulsion makes politicians of all hues and colours to visit these places and get themselves projected through the media. Participation of the politician ,the VIP gets prominence in media, depending upon his/her status. Political parties and leaders use religion and religious places and functions for their own political interests. They too exploit the masses in the name of secular religion This all is happening in the name of secular ethos of the country. Such political use of religious place does not lower the importance of the holy place or damage its sanctity if done with sincere heart and soul; but in reality what we see is that prayers are ignored and people flock round the VIP , the politician , who becomes more important at the moment than the Deity itself and on account of security the real devotees feel hurt. It would be advisable if politicians holding high profile and posts do not visit these religious places in their official capacity but only in their private and presonal capacity, when large gatherings would not be there. But !!

Respect and Defilement

Pictures of Hindu gods and goddesses are used to propagate certain products of common use. You have Lord Krishna's image with a flute on a box of incense (dhoop), and Ganesh Bidis and so on. After their use the wrappers are thrown into the dirty lanes & drains, or the dustbin. Art and eroticism are compared and put to comparison in the modern intellectual pursuit and scientific temper. This can happen only in Hindu religion. In others such an act would be blasphemy and the punishment.... ? Now, political leaders are even being projected as Hindu gods and goddesses.

Who Looks after the Shrine

After 1990 exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley of Kashmir, a good number of temples are being looked after by some Muslims. (Though there are reports and allegations that some unscrupulous elements --including Hindus-- have encroached upon the properties of temples and shrines) and protect them. In Pahalgam there is an old temple of Mahamaleshwar. It is under the control of either the State Archeology Department / ASI. However, one finds a Muslim gentleman acting as a purohit,a priest applying tilak on the foreheads of the visitors, offering prasad and tying the red saffron coloured sacred thread (nadi-bandan) round the wrist and offers holy water (Amrit). Of course he cannot recite any mantra or perform puja rituals etc.. Only a few know about it. Those know about it feel surprised why some Hindu organization like Dharmarth Trust or some other religious Trust/body which looks after temples and shrines in the Valley does not appoint a Hindu priest on a substantial salary so that Puja too could be performed. But for that Supreme Power it hardly matters who prays and who performs puja and who applies tilak. All are created by the same Supreme Power, who knows no distinction.

(Note:- I also read the story in some News Paper or may be in the Voice of Silence. I remembered it reported that the Muslim priest recited some Hindu mantras which he had crammed up without knowing the meaning.......... R.N.Kaul)

Common Ancestry

In Kashmir Hindus and Muslims share a common ancestry, as the Muslims are essentially converts; they share a common composite cultural ethos and visit shrines managed by either of the community, like Baba Rishi at Gulmarg or Chare=Sharief in Budgam and so on; and on some festivals like Urs Batamalloo, Srinagar devout Muslims turn complete vegetarian for the days of the festival Celebrations. A good number of mosques in Kashmir have been built where once Hindu templs existed and their material used in the construction.Unfortunately, politics and militancy has brought in a big divide and one cannot say when the chasm can be filled up. But meanwhile no one has lost the hope. A new generation will take care of it all in a very rational and scientific manner. New age will definitely give all this a rational shape and bring in a new scientific thinking.

So where to strike the balance

God's Abode

There is a story about a man who came from the so called low caste. He could not say who gave him this caste except that he was born in a particular family and brought up as per its customs and traditions, if it had any. He was uneducated and did not know the nuances of a religious life, prayer, gods and so on. He was quite innocent and simple and would feel quite happy if he could help someone or do some work for some body. To help others was his nature. There was a temple nearby where prayers were offered in the morning and evening, when songs would be sung in the name of gods and goddesses and prayers offered by devotees. Special bhajan sessions (Jagrans) were organized occasionally in which the participants would keep awake whole night singing songs in the name of a series of Deities and dancing in excitement to please gods and goddesses. The poor man got enchanted with the songs and music and flow of people into the temple. He would listen to the music occasionally from outside the temple premises, but did not dare to enter. An urge emerged in his mind to see God inside the temple. He too wanted to visit the temple where God lived and see God for himself. But could not. One fine day finding the high priest all alone walking near the temple gate the poor man mustered some courage, went near the priest, fell at his feet, paid his respects and told him "Sir, I want to have the darshan of God". " No , you cannot see God" the priest retorted. Poor man pleaded but without any success. Several attempts failed. The priest would occasionally move out of the temple. One day the poor man kept a watch when the priest would be walking alone outside the temple. Finding him , the poor man once again approached him with the same request. After some persuasion the priest said " O.K. but time is not yet ripe for you to see God. Recite this mantra for one year regularly three times a day, without fail and come on the same day again after that". The poor man felt happy and went home. He started reciting the mantra as directed by the priest. One year passed, he went to the gate of the temple to see the priest. The priest recognized him. "Sir, I have recited the mantra as directed by you." . Assuming the posture of an authority the priest told him "Well , it is all right but now you will have to recite this new mantra which I am giving you for one more year". The poor man

felt encouraged and had some self confidence. Reciting the mantra he felt happy. Another year passed , he returned to the priest, who gave him another mantra for another year. "Is God so difficult to be seen when He is just inside the gate of the temple", he thought to himself. Anyway he could not help the situation, but the urge increased and this urge and curiosity made him feel quite happy and jovial. He felt excited that he would be soon allowed to enter the temple gate and see God for himself He would not offend any one, but would rather help more vigorously all those who needed his services. Another year passed , he went to the priest and same story was repeated. However, this time the duration of practice was increased to two years. He felt somewhat sad, that God had extended the duration. He forgot about the mantra, God and temple and the priest. Out of disappointment he did not pass by the temple gate feeling that "God does not want to show His face to me". However he engaged himself in helping others, doing a lot of social work selflessly and even without knowing why he was doing it. He felt happy in helping others and whatever he did he did out of love and concern and without any self interest. He was happy in it. He felt in love with the birds in whose chirping he found beautiful songs, the trees dancing with the blowing of winds producing enchanting music , the clouds expressing the beauty of nature , the dancing musical stream passing by and so on. He had fallen in love with nature, humanity and life itself.
Two years passed; the priest had forgotten about this poor man. Another two years passed but the poor man was not seen. One day the priest suddenly found the poor man walking along the temple gate. The priest came out , called the poor man and asked him as to where he was all these years and he had not come to have further mantras from him to see God. Touching the priest's feet with all the humility the poor man replied , "Sir, I have seen God. He came to my house and blessed me with his darshan" . The priest in his own haughty arrogant tone asked , "How was that ? He has been all along sitting in this temple only. I have been keeping a regular watch on him, washing Him, offering Him milk and sweets, flowers and reciting mantras. Then what did He tell you, how did He look like" and so on. Laughing, the poor man replied " Sir, He came to me when I was helping a blind woman cross the road; next he came to me when I shifted a helpless man , an aged sick person to the hospital on my shoulders. He came to me several times when

He saw me to be true, kind and helpful in my thought word and deed. He came to me when I was listening to the beautiful music of chirping birds, the music produced by the gushing waters of the rivulet, when I was lost in observing the beauty of clouds in the sky and the radiance of the setting sun. He was keeping a watch on me all the time with his blessings. He also told me that He does not live in these temples and rooms built by man out of ignorance, fear and selfinterest to chain Him. He does not live there. He does not live in the make believe world of man and he cannot be reached through all these rituals of pujas , mantras and various forms of dogmas. He told me that He lives in all the living creatures and , non-living things and this whole universe is His creation and our universe is just like a grain of sand of that Reality. He is free and beyond all human thought He lives every where, but only he who looks for Him with a pure innocent mind and heart full of Love and beyond Self can find Him. So I need not come to your temple to see your caged God. May God bless you" and he moved on.

Places of Worship

Man has been building places of worship for thousands of years. Millions of such places of worship come up every year. With new architectural designs, making them more and more attractive as pieces of art , architecture and even comfort. All the gods and goddesses find a place in these places of worship, but alas, instead of liberating man, these man made edifices are only binding him further putting Him in cages and separating man from man in the name of religion, caste, sub-caste, sect and so on. How many have been liberated through these magnificent places and those who have been really liberated, those who have attained and realized the Truth in which temple did they worship and which temple did they build. And what mantra did they recite to invoke God ? What do they say about these place of worship.. What have been their experiences with these houses of God!

Creation Lies in Silence

Lalla Ded, the great mystic poetess of Kashmir, was a highly evolved being and a realized soul .While posing a question about the mode of worshipping the Lord, reciting Mantra and offerings to be made to Him she has asked as to which water should be offered and used to bathe Him , which flowers should be offered to worship and decorate Him with , and by which mantra could He be invoked. Answering her own question she had expressed like this: offer and bathe Him with the tears of love flowing from your eyes, perform His puja by offering Him the flowers of faith and love, and He can be invoked with the mantra of SILENCE (silence of mind, when thought ceases). She does not advocate any particular form of worship and asks as to whom are you going to worship in the temple where the idol is made of the same stone as that of the temple, and the two are embedded into one.

The Silence

It s said that when the most devoted and trusted disciple of Lord Buddha asked him about God, Soul, Truth the Ultimate, the Buddha kept silent. The disciple asked the question thrice and each time the Buddha was silent. When the disciple asked the same question the fourth time the Buddha said , " I have already replied you thrice". Silence was the answer.
Nature works so silently. Have we ever seen the sun making any noise while rising, or setting ? Have we seen the moon making any noise while moving and shining ? Trees, flowers grow without any sound. There is a saying still , silent waters run deep. Silence permeates through the whole process of growth and evolution. Perhaps it is in this Silence that Creation lies.

Prayer-Music, or Noise

Once I happened to live in a locality in a rented house for several years. It was a mixed locality of the so-called high caste and so-called low caste people who were owing allegiance to a particular Hindu sect. There were two temples on the right and left of the road almost facing each other; one was essentially managed and run by the sect owing allegiance to a particular guru while the other one was apparently looked after by the so called higher caste ones. Both the temples had put up amplifiers (loud speakers) atop their temple buildings where tape recorded devotional songs , religious songs, songs composed on film song-tunes were played at odd hours ranging from 3 in the morning to 10 in the night, or even late, depending upon the mood of the priest inside. Both these had put the loud speakers facing the main locality. Incidentally our residential building was the first and nearest house to the amplifiers, loud speakers across the road facing the amplifiers. The volume of the amplifiers was very high which made it difficult to face the temple side. The tape recorded songs were played by the two temples as if in a competition with regard to time, duration and volume to beat the other one.; result: noise, disturbed sleep, disturbed education of children, discomfort to the old , the infirm and the sick who needed rest and peaceful living.

However, after great persuasion the management of the other sect agreed to play its taped "music" at fixed times and in a low tone, but would sing vocally on their own, which obviously could not be a long drawn affair. Unfortunately, the management of the more commanding temple would not listen . One functionary even remarked that, "being a Hindu why are you against religious music and devotional songs. How dare you ask us to play it in a low tone when we need to propagate Hinduism ?" etc.

But who is listening to these tapes on the street and how does playing of taped music mean spreading of Hinduism ? However, after great persuasion the tapes were played in a low tone for some time but the old game was soon restarted.

How could one help such a situation ?
The fellow would not understand that true religion means love, affection, consideration for others, no discomfort to anybody. True religion does not mean causing pain to others.
And if you are really interested in prayer why not sing yourself vocally, why to use the services of a tape recorder to praise God and seek His favour, then why should not God give darshan to the tape recorder only as it was this machine which was singing songs in his favour .
Things improved for some time. But with the change of management of the temple the old routine continued and Hinduism continued to be propagated by this temple management and priest with all their zest and zeal.
Can a religion be propagated through amplifiers, loud speakers, playing tape recorded, so-called music and can God be pleased and approached through a tape recorded prayer. It needs devotion, faith and self realization.

Politicized Rituals

Sometime back I wrote an article on a religious ceremony planned to be performed by a political group of the Hindu community in the name of those souls of the community who had left for heaven and whose number was said to be running into thousands. It was on the very face of it a political stunt and gimmick, which eventually flopped. I sought some clarification, explaining my position that I was not much well versed with the holy scriptures, books and rituals. After talking about the matter with some friends of mine ,who had some knowledge about such rituals , I ventured to point out some negative points of this political use of a religious ritual, ceremony which are highly personal and sentimental to the family of a deceased , and how the same could be managed in a more objective manner without using these for political purposes and without involving the sentiments of people concerned. Of course, as I mentioned in my article, I had no authority to speak on so-called religious issues, as I am not well versed with the scriptures and deep religious issues. I also requested to be corrected and educated about the subject. Surprisingly, and not unexpected either, I received a rebuff through e-mail , apparently from a young Hindu enthusiast accusing me of having wasted seventy years of my life, if I had not read the holy books and scriptures and so on. Unfortunately, this young friend did not comment upon my write up , views and observation regarding the religious function under reference to remove my confessed ignorance and educate me on the subject as I had requested. I wonder how much did he himself know about Hinduism or how much had he himself understood and learnt from the holy books and scriptures. He should have cleared my doubts and put me on the right path and not hit me. Perhaps that is the way of fanatics to act, who feel that they are the sole guardians of a religion and authority on a subject.

Character and Conversion

There is a story about a villager. In 1947 when Pakistani tribal raiders attacked Kashmir they made non-Muslims both the Hindus and the Sikhs , selective targets. Men were killed, women abducted and raped, forcibly converted to Islam. Hundreds of young women committed suicide by jumping into rivers and by other means. In a village in Kashmir , an aged Kashmiri Pandit was caught by the raiders. He was asked to convert to Islam. Smilingly he asked them "What will you gain by converting me to Islam. I am a simple, uneducated, illiterate old villager who does not know anything beyond daily rituals, simplicity of day to day living, traditional ways of worship" and so on. "We will add to our numbers and spread Islam. We have come here to kill infidels and convert them. Do as we ask you to do." He was asked to recite the holy Quran. He laughed and told them that he had otherwise been listening to it occasionally from the villagers and so on. Then he was asked to change his name and offer one he would like to have for himself. He refused to give a name to himself and asked his captors , "What is there in a name. I am what I am , call me by name you like". Then he was asked to eat beef. This he refused straightaway. He said "Being an orthodox Brahmin I have not taken tomatoes and carrot whole of my life . I have never tasted onions and garlic. I have never taken egg , fish or meat in my life. I have never tasted non-vegetarian, prohibited food so how can I take beef , the meat of my mother cow, whom I give a daily bath and worship every morning and evening in its shed. I live by her milk So how can I take beef. The captors were very rough with him and tried to make him eat meat by force, but he lost consciousness. Regaining consciousness he found himself tied to a tree. The captors again asked him to take beef, but he again refused . He smilingly repeated what he had said earlier. "Then you must die" they threatened him. He laughed and said , If you feel you are going to add one to you clan by killing me , please do it. And if you

feel you can convert me by forcing me to take meat you are grossly mistaken. You have tried to force it into my mouth see what happened, I lost my consciousness. Now if you again try to force me to take meat or beef or anything of the sort I will never take it. You are free to kill me. I am alone in this world so the world will not suffer any loss. The wheel of time will continue to move on." All these philosophical details could not suit the intellect of the captors. So without wasting any more time they shot the poor old man dead and went away; adding one more to there clan! That was the strength of his character.

The Indescribable

There is a story about a sadhu and a butcher. A sadhu was working in the garden outside his hut in the forest area. He was quite engrossed in his work which was a form of meditation for him. He would observe everything around and be attentive to each and every movement occurring around. He was in a state of awareness and complete attention. Soon he found a cow running at full speed. Looking at the cow he tried to offer her some grass but she refused to stop and moved on. She could not be static. And the Sadhu continued with his work. Soon a man with a butcher's knife passed by that side. He asked the sadhu " Did you see a cow going this way. The sadhu looked at the man who appeared quite rough by appearance. The Sadhu looked into his eyes which conveyed an expression of anger and rage. The man was panting indicating that he must have been running at a fast speed for quite some time. However, the sight of a chopper conveyed the intentions of the man ; he was a butcher and wanted to slaughter the cow. Realizing the danger the Sadhu was in a dilemma . He had seen the cow so he could not tell a lie to save her from the butcher's chopper. He would not like to see the cow getting killed either. It would be a sin. The cow was a sacred animal whom he respected loved and worshipped. How could he let a cow get killed. The Sadhu was in a very difficult and trying situation. He was under a test. But he had to act and answer the butcher. Asking him to sit down the sadhu offered the butcher a glass of water. When the butcher again asked him the question the Sadhu ,reflecting in his mind ,replied , "Sir, those (eyes) who have seen do not , cannot speak and that which could speak (mouth) and tell you has not seen". The answer baffled and confused the butcher. He fell at the feet of the Sadhu The meaning of this is very deep and significant. He who talks, describes the Truth , delivers sermons perhaps does not know (the Truth, God, Reality etc.) and he who knows (Truth, Reality, God etc.) does not speak out. Truth is beyond description and words, mental analysis, and human thought.

Gods in Competition

It was a peace loving community given to intellectual pursuits for centuries which was forced out from the place of its origin and birth at the point of gun. It went into a disarray. A scattered community uprooted from its soil, having lost its base and moorings found itself shattered; but its internal spiritual heredity and strength kept it alive and standing with its head high. The community had produced scores of thinkers, scholars, writers , saints, authors , gurus, swamis spiritual personalities and had contributed several schools of thought to the world. Obviously it could not forget its cultural heritage and leanings even in Diaspora and in exile. It might have lost all the material assets but the rich cultural heritage was carried by it in its genes, mind, heart and soul. Settling down it started searching for its new moorings and to reestablish itself in new environs. Though libraries were lost in loot, burning and destruction; scholars killed and slain intellectuals dragged and all the barbaric brutalities of primitive times demonstrated , yet the surviving ones gradually reshaped their literary, cultural and religious and social life. Where ever possible the fleeing people had carried their books and other articles of cultural identity with them. Now they tried to reshape and rebuild the whole shattered cultural edifice and give it a hew look and shape . Books were reprinted , new books written and a new wave of creative literature of varied themes and of all hues and colours emerged. Even professional branches too emerged on a very strong footing. The sufferings , the pangs of separation from the land of birth , virtual loss of its roots became the main themes of these works. A new look was given to the cultural ethos and the songs got a new music, a new tone

Along with the literature and music , small and big gods , known and unknown deities, living and those in the heavens , who too could not save themselves from the wrath of the barbarians too were given a new life, a new shape, status and place and position. Their importance, significance increased along with the psychological , mental necessities of man. A

mushroom growth of 'ashrams', temples, "replicas of original shrines" and places of worship in the name of these saints, gurus, mahatmas, bhagwans and different deities sprang up at various places wherever the scattered devotees of these great people got settled. These Deities too got different names. Devotees were in a sort of competition to build more and more abiding places for their deities who were called by different and all the high profile good names from their devotees, bakhatas and workers. Every effort was made by the devotees to give his deity, his mahatma, his bhagwan a good look. Every effort was made to place the deity in a proper place, comfortable and see that it is well attended, well remembered , nicely worshipped and well decorated .

Human greed, and ego did not melt even in this scenario when breakaway or splinter groups would come up with a version of their own deity, and claiming that his deity was the real one. Though in a subdued simmering tone, issues started coming up regarding the legal heir, the real representative of a deity , authority to manage a shrine or ashram also came up. In this wave of competition some divided the articles belonging to the deity to build their own separate ashram for the same deity.

In this race of competition gods too got divided and the devotees sought more recognition to their own deity. Some who were alive or even became saints in subsequent years appointed people of their choice as their legal heirs to the ashram, trust, management while ignoring claims of others who had served them otherwise. All sorts of games started being played in the name of gods, saints and sainthood . While these deities and gods should have united their devotees into a single garland , they did not do so. Were they helpless or only watching the mythological game of gods. Devotees got separated each going their own way. However, the events brought about a complete cultural, revival, rejuvenation which gave the exiled community a new strength and recognition.

It seemed that the gods, instead of uniting, divided their

devotees in this game of competition. Perhaps they too enjoyed the game. Were the devotees in competition or the gods and the saints themselves , one cannot say. Gods have been always shown fighting the evil forces for the betterment of humanity , but there are many stories wherein gods have been shown fighting each other like ordinary human beings.

But competition was there. The mundane aspect of human mind worked at its best in these circumstances. While the devotees were busy in their competition, their gods simply watched them helplessly. But that Supreme Power, the Creator watched all this game with a smile and laughed at what the humans were doing. Perhaps He was playing this game knowingly as an amusement, for His ways are mysterious.

George Orwell once wrote, "It you want to earn money, invent a religion or a cult." One feels that the KPs are converting their deities and bhagwans into instruments of commerce- not culture.

IDENTITY

I Think, therefore I am
I am, what I think
One's thoughts determine one's identity-
'I' 'Me' 'mine' & So on
Can one have an individuality, existance
without any identity?
What am I without my thoughts?
What is the state of mind where thought ceases?
And thought,Time must have a stop.

The Approach

I wonder how we approach the issues of life, especially the so-called religious ones Our approach is biased, prejudiced, preconceived and conditioned, which creates a gulf, a gap and does not bring about any understanding of the Ultimate. Truth, Beauty Reality and "What is" is ignored. Incidentally while browsing through internet I found an e-mail asking if Hinduism is not a Religion then what is it ? And we must differentiate between mythology and religion and so on.

Being born in a Hindu family but brought up in an unconventional religious environment of democratic set up where openness of mind and heart had an important place , some of my life's experiences have made me think very seriously about our religious life; and what is the role, the influence of ignorance, fear, blind faith in our religious life. The incidents which I have referred to in this write up especially the first one at the beginning of this write up and the e-mail have made me think loudly about Hinduism as a religion. Is Hinduism really a religion, established and founded like other organized religions, or something quite different ? So, in this context I venture to pen down the following to seek clarification and get educated on the subject (not a rebuff).

Man takes pride in his "inventions" and feels happy. He feels that he has controlled nature but in reality he only discovers the hiden laws of nature and makes use of them.

Nature has a plan and that plan is Evolution.

Who Is A Hindu ?

What are the qualities , qualifications of a Hindu?. What is the criteria of being called a Hindu or calling some one as a Hindu. Of course, being born in a Hindu family and then being brought up in that set up and getting a Hindu name can make a person be labelled as a Hindu. This is a very important extrinsic, overt, superficial aspect, criteria, but is that alone sufficient ? Is there any intrinsic, covert , inherent critria as well; which perhaps can be more important and basic !

What makes one a Hindu ?

Does reading certain holy books, scriptures, attending seminars and conferences or lectures organized by some guru, Shankracharya, so-called religious teachers , and then debating over them without understanding the real and deep meaning or significance, or hanging pictures of Deities in the house , make one a Hindu?

Does learning and then reciting mantras by rote, quoting verbally pages of a holy book make one a Hindu ?

Does simply following certain rituals and dogmas or practices or performing a set puja as a daily routine and almost a ritual without understanding their meaning , understanding the why and how all that and without understanding the meaning and significance of all so-called religious practices and reciting mantras, sitting cross legged while one's mind is wandering in other worlds or preoccupied with other issues make one a Hindu ? Or does visiting temples , shrines and other holy places amidst singing bhajans, religious , devotional songs and dancing in excitement , which at times become big public shows and almost dramas and modes of entertainment rather than a symbol of devotion and bhakhti make one a Hindu? Does going to a temple to pray to the Almighty for power, prestige, money and fame make one a Hindu ?

So what is it that makes one a Hindu ?

Then what is the origin of the word Hindu ? Where from has it been derived ? How old is its history? Since when is the term in vogue ?

Do we find the word Hindu in the Vedas, Upnishads, Puranas, Bhagwageeta, Manu Smirti, Patanjali yogadarshana etc. ? I do not have much knowledge of all these books, scriptures and literature. I ,as a layman, need to be educated on this topic by our learned scholars, so that my knowledge is updated, as I have a feeling that the word Hindu does not exist in any of these texts etc.

Mode of Worship

Then what mode of worship is advocated ? Puja ? Prayer ? Whom are we supposed to pray ? One God or many gods as His manifestations ? What is meditation, dhyan ? Then does the practice of dhyan, meditation, yoga form part of Hinduism alone or these are universal concepts ?

Worshipping

If a man does not go to a temple, does not worship an idol, does not perform the traditional puja, does not make an offering to the Deity, does not visit shrines ,does not observe fast on special and specific days, does he cease to be a Hindu ?

Then what is Hinduism ?

Obviously an organised religion, a faith, following of certain set of puja rituals and dogmas which gain sentimental status and values, and gradually as the years pass by, these practices become imbedded in the human mind and society with a firm foundation.. After a stage no one dares to challenge or question these practices, due to fear, personal interests and motives and even ignorance , and follow these practices blindly as a matter of tradition.

Then, is Hinduism a`duly and formally established religion , founded and based on the basis of some text, set of belief ,faith, rituals, dogmas or founded on the dictates of an individual or after some individual, some evolved personality, an autar, reincarnation, or prophet, a guru and saint like Islam, Christianity , Sikhism or even Buddhism and Jainism and so on ? Can we identify or locate such a source of origin for Hinduism ?

Or is Hinduism a way of life, a philosophy of life with some inherent , intrinsic, covert, basic, absolute qualities , internal values, something everlasting and absolute, something perennial "Sanatan", to be lived, actually to be lived by a human being as a "Dharma" which means excellence, righteousness, truth, beauty and love? Should not then "Sanatan Dharma" mean living a life of excellence, love, beauty, truth and righteousness -qualities which are everlasting, perennial and absolute?

So if it is all a "Sanatan Dharma", all inclusive, then why to bind and limit it to a concept , however big it may sound and seem ? Then why not to live the life of Sanatan Dharma, follow its philosophy, based on righteousness, truth, beauty, goodness , a feeling of goodwill and welfare for all, a feeling of Vasudevkutumbhakam, a feeling of all in oneness and live as a part of universal consciousness. Sanatan Dharma as a way of life is a very broad, perenial concept, an all inclusive without any division ?

Liberation and Religion

If the goal and purpose of religion is to liberate a man , make him swantratik internally, spiritually and free him from the tangles of the world then why to bind him to these rituals , dogmas, books, fix him in different grooves of various modes of worship, divide him from other human beings and nature by fixing him in different compartments created by human thought and imagination out of fear and ignorance.
Why not to really let him be free and let him act free ? But who is to set him free except himself?

Real living

So very important question arises. Can we live as pure human beings without getting ourselves divided into numerous religious groups? Though theoretically each (man made) religion claims to be believing in one God, one Creator, One Supreme Power, Source of Energy, The Absolute Truth, Reality and Universal Consciousness, the Whole but practically , in real day to day life people are fighting and killing each other in the name of same religion. That is the truth, that is "what is". Each one of us claims that his religion teaches and preaches love, humility, humanity and tolerance,, but in spite of this claim ,we use our religions to fight and kill each other. Violence is the hall mark of our existence. We shed more blood in the name of religion than on account of any other cause.

Can a man live as a pure human being without getting divided by a tag attached to him and live a free life as an individual a man of integrity, without any identity, but with a feeling of concern for all others as human beings where Love flourishes, where there is no Self, the "I", "me" and "you" ?

That is how man can and must live. It is only then that we can have a world without wars, conflicts divisions based on the so-called religions (which inter alia dominate our political, social, administrative, geographical divisions , set ups as well). It is only then that peace can prevail. If we want to make this world, our world happy and peaceful then we must be true, kind and helpful in our thought, word and deed. Perhaps this could be one's true religion and the highest form of worship, as man is responsible for his behaviour

The Real Temple

Perhaps in this process and state of mind man does not need man made temples, mosques, churches, to worship that Supreme Power , Truth Beauty, Supreme Energy, Universal Consciousness which is the embodiment of Love, and which cannot be found in all the books and man made edifices, but in the Life itself; something beyond limited human consciousness. The enlightenment comes when you realize that truth is in love and in our relationship with other fellow beings, nature and not in any organized religion or cult based on ignorance, fear or feelings of guilt. A life of love is real temple.

Go not to the temple to put flowers
upon the feet of God,
First fill your own house with
the fragrance of love;
Go not to the temple to light candles
before the altar of God,
First remove the darkness of sin
from your heart;
Go not to the temple to bow down
your head in prayer;
First learn to bow in humility
before your fellowmen,
Go not to the temple to pray
on bended knees,
First bend down to lift some one
Who is downtrodden;
Go not to the temple to ask for
forgiveness for your sins;
First forgive from your heart
those who have sinned against you;

—Rabindranath Tagore

The Symbol

A great teacher has said, "The word Love is not Love" or "the Word God is not God" as the word tree is not tree. But we live on symbols

The Truth

Truth is something beyond human consciousness and imagination, beyond the limited thought of man. Man has to realize his real self, know his true being and know himself. "Know thyself" has got to be his real meditation, prayer , which can come through absolute attention, awareness. That can be the worship of a religious mind , quality of a freeman, a liberated soul. "Truth is a pathless land", says a great teacher and thinker. No prophet or guru can take you there, except yourself , as you are already there; only that you have to take the first step, as "first step is the last step."

Change Is Essential

Man's thought process has to undergo a psychological change, a transformation, may be a complete mutation ; there has got to be an inner revolution and this can happen only through real and true religious mind. So we have to find out what this real religious mind can be. Humility is an essential quality of that mind, and "humility is the essence of all virtue. Humility is not to be cultivated, nor is virtue........Learning is the very essence of humility, learning from everything and from everybody."

About A Religious Mind

In spite of tremendous technological development progress and affluence , events taking place round the world indicate that there is a general degeneration in human society. Human capacity for affection , consideration , concern, love and all essential things of human nature are gradually declining. Human problems of hunger, illness, poverty, beliefs, rituals, dogmas are on the increase. Very unfortunately there are problems even at the level of human relationships. This is a global, world wide phenomenon., problem of all mankind. No sectarian or isolated approach can help us here; though there may be some temporary partial relief at times and at certain levels,but the basic problems of suffering continue to haunt us.. What is needed is a global outlook, global action.
Every human being goes through these sufferings and agonies of loneliness, misery, corruption, confusion, dishonesty at different levels in different forms. This needs to be understood and realized by one's heart, internally and not merely intellectually and academically only. "Every human being is the rest of the world; he is the world; his consciousness-modified-is the rest of the world's. And so, when one particular human being transforms himself radically, deeply, fundamentally, then he does affect the whole consciousness of mankind".
No political organization or revolution nor any religion has ended man's sufferings, his agonies, nor have the wars and chaos in the world come to any end. Man continues to suffer. Politics with its endeavor for dominance has divided countries and nations; and religions with their beliefs, dogmas, rituals embedded in fear and superstitions have separated man from man. Every form of political organization has failed in removing human misery. Politicians are after power only and religious gurus are after fame to create their own domains. Even scientists have not been able to solve human problems, human conflicts, anxieties and human relationships
It is very essential for us to understand why we human beings live the way we are living, with our confusion, sorrow, misery, conflicts, and all the rest in spite of our affluence, wealth and gods. Why do we accept our daily life of conflict struggle in

our relationships why we dominate each other. We have to understand that desire , greed, fear, pleasure are major causes of our confusion, contradiction and conflict.

There is a great need for new culture (not opposed to the old culture nor continuity of the same in any modified form) and this new culture can only be born out of a religious mind, a mind without fear, a mind which is free from any bondage, and a heart which has overcome sorrow, moved beyond the fear of death, seen the "truth in the false" and understands love. A truly religious mind is a free mind and only a free mind can be a religious mind.

Some extracts from a talk by J.Krishnamurti where he talks about a religious mind

"..........What is a religious mind ?

"First of all , in understanding the problem what a truly religious mind is we may grasp the significance of the word, the meaning of the word and realize that word is not the thing.......but words are necessary for communication.........What is religion ? What is a mind that can hold, or understand , or comprehend the beauty of a profoundly religious mind ? ....That is we are challenging , demanding, asking the brain , the mind, the whole nature of our mind: What is a religious person ? One has looked up various dictionaries and they more or less say that originally , etymologically, the meaning of the word 'religion'—in Latin , Geek and so on—was 'to bind'. But many etymologists have denied that. Now they are saying that the meaning of religion implies 'gathering all your energy to discover'—they do not say what (is to be discovered). 'Gathering all your energy' we are saying (the word means) 'gathering all your energy to discover what truth is', (to discover) if there is anything sacred in life (not the temples, churches, mosques; they are not sacred ; they are illusions created by thought) . But there must be freedom , to find out, or to come upon that thing that is wholly, completely, irrevocably sacred, (and) not invented by thought, by man. So , that is the meaning of the word 'religion'.

The word 'mind' includes not only sensory activities, (it also includes)all the emotional reactions, the images, the beliefs, the anxieties, the intellectual capacity to reason logically—reasonably not unreasonably—to be caught in illusion, and to see that one is caught in an illusion , and to be free of that illusion. All that is mind. When we talk of 'the mind' it includes the brain , which is very, very, very old, ancient and beyond memory. And the brain has been conditioned millen-

nia upon millennia. The genetic conditioning, and the cultural conditioning, the social, religious conditioning—that is the brain; it contains all the genetic memories, the experiences, the knowledge of man's existence on earth....And tradition—the values, the beliefs, the dogmas, the concepts handed down from generation to generation—is part of that brain, is part of that mind. All the knowledge which you have acquired recently , or through the immemorial past—all that is part of mind. So we are using the word 'mind' to convey a whole process of the past, with its tradition, with its rituals, with all the things man has collected..

'Revolution' means gathering together certain incidents, concepts, beliefs, and forming a circle. Physical revolutions..........are the result of incidents, accidents, concepts, ideas, conclusions, forming a circle. ....We are not talking about revolution in that sense at all. We are talking about revolution in which man, the psychological structure of man , is radically fundamentally transformed. That is the only revolution. Physical revolution cannot bring about solutions (to) the ending of man's utter misery. ....

What is the nature of a mind that is profoundly religious ? because religion is the only solution........What is the nature and the movement of a religious mind ? Obviously , to investigate the nature of such a mind—the mind that is whole, that is sacred, that is totally free—to inquire into it, one must begin with having freedom; otherwise you can't inquire. Any form of investigation demands that the mind observe either microscopically, or observe the whole human activity outside there or inside. (For that) there must be freedom to look. Freedom—not the freedom that has an opposite.......And to inquire into one of the most ancient demands of man –which is, what is it to have a religious quality of mind ?—you must have freedom to look. Which means, you don't belong to any religion. Right ? .Your are neither a Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim , Christian, with all their dogmas,

images, and all the rest of it. To examine what the religious mind is you don't belong to anything........A religious person has no philosophy, because such a mind is with that which is eternally sacred. So that is the first requirement, if you are interested to examine the question of the mind that is religious.

In an investigation of any kind, freedom is utterly important.......Now, this is the first thing if you are at all serious; not to belong to any organization, to any sect, group, community......There is no guru, no scripture, no ritual—nothing—in order to find out. It does not mean that one becomes lonely...........The appalling things that are happening around you —(mankind) accepts that. And when you break away from that , you might feel that you have isolated yourself. You breakaway from that because that is illusion; that will never, under any circumstance, lead to truth. And the very observation is the operation of intelligence that says, 'That is false'. When you see that which is false, the seeing, the perception, is the operation of intelligence.

....

....intelligence is the essence of compassion. And there can be no compassion without the ending of sorrow.................

There are so many commentators. You read them, and they never help you to discover that which is false; the commentators themselves make it false. So , to understand what is a religious mind there must be freedom first. Freedom implies that you are not attached to a thing, but that you observe. You have no opinions, no conclusions, no concepts but (the) mere observation of what is actually going on............

....

Who has created the gods, or only the one God, or the representative of God, or the God's son, or all the innumerable gods with their goddesses? Who has created them? We call 'religion' going to the temple, to the mosques, the churches, you know, the whole thing—who has created (it)?.....Man has obviously created them. Thought has brought this about.....God

is the invention of man. There are the Hindu gods, opposed to the Christian God, the Muslim God; the Buddhists have no gods but they have their own Bodhisattvas and so on . Man has created this out of his sorrow, out of his fear, out of his death, out of his confusion, uncertainty, physical insecurity. Out of this matrix, the things that we have called 'gods' have been born. And these gods have been handed down from generation to generation.

If you reject all that, then you create a god of yourself, your own concepts; you become an atheist , which is another form of godhood......Because of your own uncertainty , out of your own sorrow, total insecurity, you want something continuous , something that is timeless, something that knows no death. Out of that longing, you create some marvelous image for yourself, and you say, "That is Reality"

So, one has to understand why thought does this all the time. It has done it from immemorial times......(From) the moment man began to think, he has created the gods in heaven, or on earth, and worshipped an image, or a tree or a stone, made by the hand or the mind. Do look into it yourself, because any particular religion, any particular tribal religion is not going to answer; it is not going to be the salvation of man. it has to be a global religion.

....

....

Freedom to inquire into that which is false. ....and seeing the false or the truth in that which is happening now, is to investigate and see that which is illusory, and (to) put that aside totally....That is the beginning of freedom.

....

..........................fear, desire, continuous demand for various forms of pleasure—pleasure of possession, pleasure of status, pleasure of being somebody, pleasure of identification with a country, with a group, with a conclusion, the pleasure of sex, the pleasure of one's own experience and living in that experience. And fear......a mind that is clouded

with fear can never be religious.......How can a mind that is frightened , that says, "I must find some comfort out of my insecurity, out of my confusion? As long as a mind is frightened , it cannot possibly have the religious quality....Which means: In the inquiring , are you free of fear ? for otherwise you cannot possibly have a mind that is the essence of religion.

Desire , fear and the everlasting pursuit of pleasure not only create, bring about confusion , but also those are the qualities , that make up 'the self', 'the me', the centre from which all activities begin when the thought comes along and says ,"what marvellous thing that is , to have had . I want 'more' of it ....'more' is the pleasure., not the actual moment of perception of something beautiful, lovely..

And, also, to understand the nature and the structure , which is the movement, of a religious mind, obviously must end sorrow.........Man has carried this burden of sorrow for millennia; and we still have it. ....Religions have not solved this.

So we are asking.....whether sorrow can end , as fear— because fear is part of sorrow, desire is part of sorrow. And if you go into the whole question of the whole movement of pleasure , it is also part of sorrow; only we want pleasure and avoid the other. So we are asking: Can this sorrow end, not only your particular sorrow, but the sorrow of mankind ? Mankind's sorrow , which is poverty, the utter degradation of poverty, class division, the constant uncertainty of life, the imminent wars, the destruction, the brutality of wars ? Man has never stopped wars. .....So there is not only your particular little agony, but the agony of the whole of mankind, of which you are a part. So we have to resolve this. Without the resolution of it there is no religious mind. When there is the ending of that sorrow, something else comes into being.........So we have to inquire whether sorrow can end. Which is, can fear end?

...........words are not the fact. The word 'sorrow' is not the agony that one has inside. And the description, however great, however subtle, however magnified—that descrip-

tion is not the actual fear. We also have to the whole meaning of death because that is part of our life. –the ending of the brain cells, the ending of everything that one has collected, gathered, held on (to).

What is sorrow ? What is your sorrow ?

Either you take one sorrow after another.....but another grief arises....or you observe the whole nature of this sorrow, as a whole ?........Not a particular sorrow, because the particular can never lead to the whole; the particular is the broken piece. The broken piece is not the whole............

So can you observe the whole nature, the whole movement of sorrow ? That is , to observe wholly. I mean by that word 'whole', to have a very clear , logical, sane mind, sane observation, logical, clear, precise; precision is not diluted by your prejudice, by your longing, by your motive, so that you can observe without any distortion. Which means : can you put aside your opinions, your conclusions, or the commentator's conclusions......and observe wholly the whole movement of man's agony and sorrow...Through the particular to come to the whole is false...So when you see that which is false, that falls away. The very perception of the false is the beginning of intelligence. This intelligence is not yours, or mine or particular intelligence. It is seeing that which is true and that which is false—not the truth according to your conclusion, according to your prejudice, according to your tradition. You must be free of all that.

So, can you observe not only your sorrow but the sorrow of mankind, of which you are a part, as a whole; the sorrow of a person who is physically ill, and the sorrow of a person who does not believe in anything? That person who does not believe in anything is the same as the man who believes. ....
Now in the same way.........can you observe —not a particular fear, but the root of fear?...root of fear is time, time is thought, thought is fear....when there is a motive –motive means movement—when there is self-interested movement , there is distortion in observation.....when there is no motive in your examination (of sorrow) then is that sorrow different

from you ?...As you are fear, as you are angry, as you are jealous—jealousy is not different from you, your greed is not different from you.....We are saying : anger is you; when there is a moment of anger—anger being violence and all that—at the moment of anger there is no 'you' and that reaction. Then thought identifies itself with that reaction, saying,' That is anger; I have been angry therefore thought separates itself from that thing which is called anger............

So, we are saying: The observer is the observed, the thinker is the thought, the experiencer is the experience; and sorrow is not different from himself. ....there is no division between you and that which you are observing........when there is no division, the very observation of that brings about a radical change in that which is being observed..

So is there an observation of sorrow without the observer ?.....sorrow is the loss (of something say death of son)... treasured, held, with which I have identified myself.........it is the avoidance and escape from what is actually going on; the observation of what is actually going on when one loses a son, or a husband or wife , anything that is actually going on. In the observation of that , if there is no division, when the observer is the observed, then, in that observation, that which is being observed undergoes a radical , fundamental change.. .....in our inquiry into what is a religious life any form of fear , any form of activity will—which is the essence of desire—any form of seeking pleasure , will distort your observation; distort not *your* observation, (but) observation.

........there is an ending to sorrow. And when there is an ending of sorrow, out of that comes passion, not lust—passion being compassion. A religious mind....... To find out for yourself there must be freedom—freedom from fear.. And pleasure is totally different from the perception of something beautiful, marvelous..... but when thought takes over that joy, it becomes pleasure.

......when there is the ending of fear , there is no illusion...and with the ending of sorrow there is passion, there is that extraordinary sense of tremendous energy .....of this

great limitless intelligence of compassion.

..... in the understanding of that (death and meditation)+ the religious mind comes into being. The religious mind comes into being when we understand the whole human existence of relationship in which there is no fear, no domination, no control, when we know what love is....when there is love. Love has no remembrance; love is not the movement of desire; love is not the activity of pleasure. That is why it is so essential to understand all this, because we have lost that thing. Probably we never had it—that thing called love.

(+ see the next separate extracts on , meditation, death etc.)

Love and Death

You cannot avoid death; you may forget it, you may rationalize it or believe that you will be reborn or resurrected. Do what you will, go to any temple or book it is always there, in festival and in health. You must live with it to know it; you cannot know it if you are frightened of it; fear only darkens it. To know it you must love it. To live with it you must love it. The knowledge if of it is not the ending of it. It is the end of knowledge but not of death. To love is not to be familiar with it; you cannot be familiar with destruction. You cannot love something you do not know but you do not know anything, not even your wife or your boss, let alone a total stranger. But you must love it., the stranger, the unknown. You only love that of which you are certain, that which gives comfort, security. You do not love the uncertain, the unknown; you may love danger, give your life for another or kill another for your country, but this is not love; these have their own reward and profit; gain and success you love though there is pain in them. There is no profit in knowing death but strangely death and love always go together; they never separate. You cannot love without death; you cannot embrace without death being there. Where love is there is also death, they are inseparable. But do we know what love is ? You know sensation, emotion, desire, feeling and the mechanism of thought but none of these is love. You love your husband, your children; you hate war but you practice war. Your love knows hate, envy, ambition, fear; the smoke of these is not love. Power and prestige you love but power and prestige are evil, corrupting. Do we know what love is ? Never knowing it is the wonder of it, the beauty of it. Never knowing, which does not mean remaining in doubt nor does it mean despair; it is the death of yesterday and so the complete uncertainty of tomorrow. Love has no continuity, nor has death. Only memory and picture in the frame have continuity but these are mechanical and even machines wear out, yielding place to new pictures, new memories. What has continuity is ever decaying and what decays is not death. Love and death are inseparable and where they are there is always destruction.

—J.Krishnamurti

On Meditation

Meditation without a set formula, without a cause and reason, without end and purpose is an incredible phenomenon. It is not only a great explosion which purifies but also it is death, that h.0as no tomorrow. Its purity devastates, leaving no hidden corner where thought can lurk in its own dark shadows. Its purity is vulnerable; it is not a virtue brought into being through resistance. It is pure because it has no resistance , like love. There is no tomorrow in meditation, no argument with death. The death of yesterday and of tomorrow does not leave the petty present of time, and time is always petty, but a destruction that is the new. Meditation is this, not the silly calculations of the brain in search of security. Meditation is destruction to security and there is great beauty in meditation, not the beauty of the things that have been put together by man or by nature but of silence. This silence is emptiness on which and from which all things flow and have their being. It is unknowable, neither intellect nor feeling can make their way into it; there is no way to it and a method to it is the invention of a greedy brain. All the ways and means of the calculating self must be destroyed wholly; all going forward or backward, the way of time, must come to an end, without tomorrow. Meditation is destruction; it is a danger to those who wish to lead a superficial life and a life of fancy and myth.

—J.Krishnamurti

On Understanding

There's no understanding in time. Understanding does not come tomorrow; it will never come tomorrow; it is now or never; there's only now and there's no never. The "seeing" is immediate; when from the brain the significance of "seeing", understanding, eventually is wiped away, then seeing is immediate. "Seeing" is explosive, not reasoned, calculated. It is fear that often prevents " Seeing", understanding. Fear, with its defences and its courage, is the origin of conflict. The seeing is not only with the brain but also beyond it. Seeing the fact brings its own action, entirely different from the action of idea, thought; action from idea, thought, breeds conflict; action then is an approximation, comparison with the formula, with the idea, and this brings conflict. There's no end to conflict, small or great, in the field of thought; the essence of conflict is non-conflict which is maturity.

— J.Krishnamurti

The Prayer

From the unreal

Lead me to the real,

From darkness

Lead me to light,

From Death

Lead me to immortality

Om Shanti ! Om Shanti !Om Shanti!

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